Foreword

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is pleased to publish an updated edition of the *Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual* (FICM). The FICM was first published in 1973 and was last revised in 1994. In the years between the publication of the 1994 FICM and the present time, postsecondary education has changed substantially in terms of the students it serves, the technologies that are available to it, and the innovations institutions have begun to embrace. All of these changes dictated the importance of examining the 1994 FICM to determine what modifications, updates, and additions might be needed to provide a better, more useful industry-wide standard for facilities management and administration.

To provide community input into the 2006 revisions of the FICM, NCES, with the assistance of Kreon Cyros of INSITE and Lander Medlin of the Association for Higher Education Facilities Officers, assembled a working group of facilities experts who represented various types of postsecondary institutions, postsecondary associations, state agencies, federal agencies, and private sector companies specializing in postsecondary institution facilities. This group guided the entire process of updating the FICM.

This edition of the FICM differs from the previous editions more in its intent and organization than in its content. It is designed to be useful to both specialized staff and generalists and to be applicable to institutions with sophisticated information needs as well as to those with more basic facilities information needs. It reflects the perspective that along with human resources and financial assets, space is one of the primary resources of an educational institution. In fact, for some institutions, the dollar value (initial cost, replacement cost, and market value) of the institution’s buildings frequently exceeds the institution’s annual operating budget and endowment.

The FICM is a tool that can help institutions initiate, conduct, report, and maintain an institutional space inventory that can provide answers to such basic questions as how much space is available, what kind of space is it, to whom is it assigned, and how efficiently is it being used and maintained. This information permits institutions to assess the adequacy of their current space and allows them to begin planning for future space needs.

NCES has a continuing commitment to the education community to provide technical assistance and support that will facilitate the collection, reporting, and use of high quality education data. This third edition of the FICM is just one example of that commitment. The two previous editions of the FICM became standards for collecting and reporting data on postsecondary institution facilities. We are confident that this edition will have the same value and utility as its predecessors.

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